



Summer 2021

# From the *Fall Line*

Serving the Counties of King George, Spotsylvania, Stafford & the City of Fredericksburg



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The Season is Changing and so is the District

Recommended Readings

Environmental Education Continues Despite the Pandemic

NRCS Corner

October is Riparian Buffer Month!

Save the Date: Turning a New Leaf Conference

Community Insights

Tri-County/City Directory

# THE SEASON IS CHANGING AND SO IS THE DISTRICT



Fall is around the corner as temperatures and the leaves begin to drop. Tri-County/City Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) is turning a new page to our chapter!

As the seasons slowly shift, so does the staff at Tri-County/City SWCD. We are excited to announce the arrival of not one, not two... but three new employees at the District! Please give a warm welcome to our two new Conservation Specialists, **Logan Ellis** and **Dan Kossler**, as well as our new Administrative Professional, **Renee Davis**. And, while we are sad to see Scott Adams leave as our Conservation Specialist, we also want to wish him all the best as he joins the Virginia Department of Forestry as their Resource Specialist in Bowling Green! We'll be seeing him at our monthly Board Meetings in the future.

## CONTACT US

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**Meet Logan Ellis, our Conservation Specialist!**

Logan joins us from the Tappahannock area in Essex County where he was raised and still resides. At age thirteen, Logan began working on the family's grain farm, later joining his father to help run the family restaurant. Logan attended the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) where he received his bachelor's degree in Crop & Soil Science in Spring of 2021. Some of his interests within the field include plasticulture-grown vegetables with drip irrigation. Logan also managed his own produce stand where he sold his own plasticulture-grown vegetables, candles, and oil paintings before joining Tri-County/City SWCD. In his free time, Logan enjoys hunting, fishing, and reading a plethora of books.

Please give a warm welcome to Logan!



Conservation Specialist Logan Ellis is ready to take on the challenge!

**Meet Dan Kossler, our part-time Conservation Specialist!**

Dan comes to Tri-County/City SWCD with 13 years of experience at Southern States Cooperative where he worked his way up from warehouse staff to manager. He worked out of Raleigh, NC; Abingdon and Tazewell, VA; and Charlotte Hall, MD! Since 2017, Dan has been doing agricultural consulting work, including writing certified Virginia nutrient management plans. He has a bachelor's degree in Agricultural & Environmental Technology from North Carolina State University. And to keep himself on his toes, Dan is currently pursuing a master's degree in Data Analytics at American University.

Please welcome Dan to our District!



Conservation Specialist Dan Kossler is prepared to work with our farmers!

## Recommended Reading

### **"Entangled Life: How Fungi Make Our Worlds, Change Our Mind, and Shape Our Futures"** by Merlin Sheldrake

When we think of fungi, we likely think of mushrooms. But mushrooms are only fruiting bodies, analogous to apples on a tree. Most fungi live out of sight yet they make up a massively diverse kingdom of organisms that supports and sustains nearly all living systems. Fungi help us understand the planet on which we live, the ways we think, feel, and behave. Join the brilliant young biologist, Merlin Sheldrake, as he shows us the world from a fungal point of view, providing an exhilarating change of perspective.

This book was dampened and inoculated with *Pleurotus* (oyster mushroom) mycelium. The mycelium then digested the pages - and the words - of the book to sprout over the course of seven days. *Pleurotus* can digest many things - from crude oil to used cigarette butts - and is one of the fungal species that shows the most promise in cleaning pollutants in the environment (aka mycoremediation). It is also delicious when fried lightly with garlic and will make it possible for the author to eat his words. Photo Credit: DRK Videography





**Meet Renee Davis, our Administrative Professional!**

A local resident of Colonial Beach, Renee joined the Tri-County/City SWCD Team in September. Renee's professional experience prior to coming onboard spans almost 30 years in bookkeeping and administration. She loves to involve herself in the community through youth programs. Some of her pastime activities include coaching color guard and volunteering with The Dixie Royals, a baton troop in Battlefield Elementary School (for 25 years!). When Renee isn't out and about in the community, she enjoys cooking, learning to quilt, and water skiing on the Potomac River! If you have a recipe for her to try out or would just like to say hello, reach out to Renee at ([renee.davis@tccswcd.org](mailto:renee.davis@tccswcd.org)). Welcome, Renee!



Administrative Professional Renee Davis is excited to be a part of the District family!



Tri-County/City Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) has served the Commonwealth of Virginia Counties of King George, Spotsylvania, Stafford since 1944 and the City of Fredericksburg since 1984. We are a local political subdivision of the Commonwealth, focusing on natural resource problems and solutions. Like other conservation districts, Tri-County/City SWCD is self-governed and non-profit and establishes priorities, sets policy, and administers programs to conserve soil and water resources. Tri-County/City SWCD is not a regulatory agency. Instead, the agency provides technical assistance, information, educational programs, volunteer opportunities, and newsletters to citizens on many aspects of water quality, nonpoint source pollution, and stream health.

**Our Staff Contacts****Administration & Management:**

Marta Perry, District Manager - [Marta.Perry@tccswcd.org](mailto:Marta.Perry@tccswcd.org)

Renee Davis, Administrative Professional -

[Renee.Davis@tccswcd.org](mailto:Renee.Davis@tccswcd.org)

**Agriculture:**

Logan Ellis, Conservation Specialist - [Logan.Ellis@tccswcd.org](mailto:Logan.Ellis@tccswcd.org)

Dan Kossler, Conservation Specialist - [Dan.Kossler@tccswcd.org](mailto:Dan.Kossler@tccswcd.org)

**Education & Urban/Residential:**

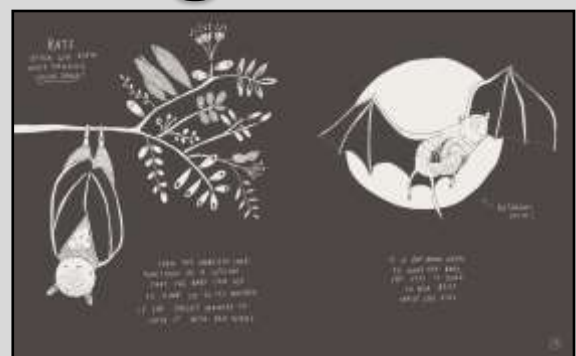
Mariya Hudick, Education Coordinator -

[Mariya.Hudick@tccswcd.org](mailto:Mariya.Hudick@tccswcd.org)

# Recommended Reading

## **"Amazing Facts About Baby Animals: An Illustrated Compendium" by Maja Säfström**

Who doesn't love baby animals? This charming collection is an adorable celebration of all sorts of fuzzy, fluffy, scaly, and feathery animal babies and their parents by beloved Swedish artist Maja Säfström. Full of interesting, weird, and funny facts about animals before they are born (elephants are pregnant for 22 months!), when they are born (whales are born tail-first so they don't drown!), and their life as babies (parrots give their offspring names!), this book is perfect for art- and nature-loving kids and adults!



If a Bat Mom needs to move her baby, she'll let it cling to her belly while she flies!

## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CONTINUES DESPITE GLOBAL PANDEMIC

Environmental literacy and our connection to nature is vital as we feel the disconnect of a global pandemic. While the current state of the world has greatly impacted all forms of education across the country, Tri-County/City SWCD continues to provide environmental programs to local students to keep the connection to nature and conservation alive. In Summer 2021, our Education Coordinator partnered with the YMCA Power Scholars, Downtown Greens, REACH Homeschool Community, and the Boys & Girls Club of the Rappahannock Region to bring the magic of soil and water conservation to area youth with interactive and fun activities. Through these efforts and more, the District managed to interact with over 700 kids across King George, Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania, and Stafford!



Who knew you could identify rocks by licking them!? Fun fact, geologists (scientists that study rocks and minerals) do this all the time!

Whether it is live online programs or in-person activities at a community garden, Tri-County/City SWCD continues to provide opportunities of learning. One of our most popular programs among Middle and High School grade levels is an analysis of global geopolitics and how nations utilize natural resources for their survival and livelihood. Students trade colored cards that represent air quality, regional climate, agricultural resources, freshwater access, and oil to demonstrate how countries come to global and regional power through their resource reserves. Students then discuss the global environmental responsibility of countries, the impact from infrastructure and expansion on wetlands and natural preserves, and the political influence that natural resources have over country relations. Programs like these focus on getting students to see beyond the scope of their classroom and into the real world through simulated games to make learning fun.

### What is **Environmental Literacy**?

Environmental Literacy is when students understand the ecological, economic, and cultural connections between humans and the environment.

Mr. Curtis Dickerson, the Site Director and Teen Center Leader for the Boys & Girls Club of the Rappahannock Region commented on Tri-County/City SWCD Summer programs:

**“The hands-on activities were a wonderful experience for the members of the Boys & Girls Club. Having them feel the soil and rocks provided an experience you cannot get researching on a computer. It moved the club members to areas outside of their comfort zone. It also exposed them to ways of researching and learning without the use of technology.”**



King George YMCA campers explore the wonders of soil and rocks through a “hands-on” approach!

### What is **Geopolitics**?

Geopolitics is the study of regional geography and its impact on politics and international relations.

Are you interested in scheduling an environmental program with Tri-County/City SWCD? Reach out to our Education Coordinator, Mariya Hudick, at [mariya.hudick@tccswcd.org](mailto:mariya.hudick@tccswcd.org) or call our office at (540) 656-2401!

# NRCS CORNER



United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service

## Fall Reminders for Producers

### **For Cropland Producers:**

As Fall approaches, it is time to see the benefits of the seeds that were sown in the spring. Hopefully everyone has an abundant harvest. Fall also brings the time to get cover crops planted. If there are cover crops that NRCS or SWCD are providing incentive payments for please make sure the associated fields are planted within the timeframe indicated by the program and call in to the NRCS or SWCD office to let us know when you are planting. If there are any questions about when or where the cover crops need to be planted, please give us a call.

If you have nutrient management practices planned through the programs, please continue to keep good application records and remember to collect harvest yield data.

### **For Livestock Producers:**

Fall is also a good time to start thinking about frost seeding legumes into your grazing paddocks. Frost seeding usually takes place during the Winter months, but Fall is a great time to narrow down the fields to be planted and the species to be planted. Fall can also be a great time to add some nitrogen to the fescue fields that will be used for stockpiling forage. Nitrogen applications can help the grasses put on good growth before they are utilized for grazing. Lastly, be sure to have adequate supplements like proper minerals and other needed nutrients available to your cattle that will help carry them through the Winter.

### **For All Producers:**

The annual primary nesting and brood season for wild birds is **April 15<sup>th</sup> through August 15<sup>th</sup>** so Fall is a great time to conduct maintenance activities on wildlife habitat areas.

If there are any questions feel free to call Brian, Matt, Carlie, or Ben!  
Fredericksburg NRCS Field Office

### **Are You or Someone You Know Interested in Conservation?**

Join the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)'s Earth Team Volunteer Program today! Any individual 14 years or older and/or any organization can become a volunteer! Through the Earth Team Volunteer Program, participants help put conservation on the ground by working alongside both NRCS and SWCD employees. For more information, contact your local USDA-NRCS at (540)-899-9492, Ext. 5!



*Helping People Help the Land*

### **Looking for Technical and/or Financial Assistance to Implement Conservation?**

If you or someone you know is interested or in need of technical and/or financial assistance to implement conservation practices on their property, be sure to contact your local USDA-NRCS at (540)-899-9492, Ext. 5 to set up a site visit, to see what we can do for you!



## OCTOBER IS RIPARIAN BUFFER MONTH!

Celebrate riparian buffers this October during the first annual Riparian Buffer Month! Riparian buffers, or streamside forests, are one of the best ways to protect and improve our local streams. They prevent erosion, reduce flooding, provide habitat for wildlife in and near the water, create recreational opportunities, and filter pollutants. They deserve to be celebrated!



Riparian buffers are essential to curb soil erosion and runoff while providing habitats for wildlife.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO:

- Look for #BufferBanter and #RiparianBufferMonth posts from your favorite conservation organizations on social media. Like, Share, Comment, etc. Visit the [Riparian Buffer Month website](#).
- Donate to organizations that are planting and maintaining riparian buffers in your area like your local watershed association.
- Attend a buffer volunteer planting, maintenance day, or educational event.
- If you have a stream, think about planting or improving the buffer on your property. Check out these [great ideas](#) for buffer plantings from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science.
- Share what you learn with family and friends!



Are you a Landscaping Professional that wants to learn more about Riparian Buffers? Consider signing up for the virtual webinars and on-site learning with the Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council.

This comprehensive riparian buffer training program includes three sessions. Participants must attend all sessions to earn the CBLP—Buffers certificate, however, there is an a la carte option to register for the first “[Riparian Buffer Basics](#)” webinar, alone, and the [Urban Buffer Design Webinar](#) is an add-on option, *not required for the certificate*. Partial scholarships are available for qualified participants in Pennsylvania and Virginia, email Katie Pinkham at [katie@cblpro.org](mailto:katie@cblpro.org) for details.

## SAVE THE DATE: TURNING A NEW LEAF VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

The Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council’s (CCLC) 2021 *Turning a New Leaf* Conference will be held virtually on December 8 - 9, from 9 AM – 3 PM, and will be followed by live field events in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia on December 10. This year, CCLC is highlighting collaborations that normalize sustainable practices and ensure diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice.

CCLC is excited to welcome keynote speaker, landscape architect, Darrel Morrison. If you’re looking for a great summer read, check out Darrel’s [new book](#), “*Beauty of the Wild: A Life Designing Landscapes Inspired by Nature*”.

Most presentations will be full-audience sessions, with one shorter concurrent session, offering numerous options, each day. Topics include: climate change, growing the workforce, results from nativar trials, equity in landscape design, landscaping impacts on pollinators, permaculture, working with Home Owners Association’s, beavers and stream restoration, and more!

The DC-area field trip will be held at Audubon Naturalist Society’s Woodend Sanctuary in Chevy Chase, Maryland. The Pennsylvania field trip will be at the Stroud Water Research Center in Avondale. The Virginia field trip will be at Paradise Creek Nature Park in Portsmouth.



Register for the conference [here!](#)

# COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

KEEP IN THE KNOW AND UP TO DATE!

## Mark Your Calendars!

Click on the event title link to find out more online.

### Mid-Atlantic Urban Agriculture Summit

Virginia Cooperative Extension  
October 12-14

Welcome to the first Mid-Atlantic Urban Agriculture Summit! Topics include Urban Agriculture and Food Security; Innovations in Urban Ag: Business, Technology, and Policy; and Urban Community Gardening. Online. Registration required!

### Family Wildlife Festival

Friends of the Rappahannock  
October 16, 10 AM – Noon

Join Friends of the Rappahannock for an afternoon of fun, hands-on educational opportunities for young explorers from Pre-Kindergarten to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade to learn about fish, squirrels, deer, birds, and the Rappahannock river! Registration required!

### Composting for Non-Composters

Fredericksburg Food Co-Op  
October 17, 2 PM – 3 PM

Discover which food waste and other materials make excellent compost and how to effectively store those wastes for later composting. You'll also learn about a convenient means for getting your waste to a composting facility. FREE.

### Author Talk: Our Changing Menu

Fredericksburg Food Co-Op  
October 19, 6 PM – 7 PM

Carrie Koplinka-Loehr, co-author of *Our Changing Menu: Climate Change and the Foods We Love and Need*, explores the complex ties between your next meal and a warming planet. Learn about climate change's impact on the global food system and what you can do to help. Online. Registration required!

### How to Care for Houseplants

Virginia Master Gardeners  
October 22, 10 AM – 11:30 AM

Interested in bringing your gardening hobby indoors or looking to add a little green to your space? This presentation is geared toward the beginner houseplant owner but will be a great refresher for anyone looking to make their houseplant ventures more successful. Online. FREE. Registration required!

### Yoga in the Park

Widewater State Park  
October 23, 10 AM – 11 AM

Combine the healing powers of nature and yoga. Instructors from Latitude Yoga Co. in Stafford lead an hour-long yoga class as you take in the beauty of Aquia Creek. Dress in your yoga best and bring your own mat and water bottle. Max size per class is 30 people, reservation is not required. FREE.

### Leave the Leaves! And other Beneficial Composting Practices

Virginia Master Gardeners  
October 29, 10 AM – 11:30 AM

Fall is the perfect time to practice good composting and mulching practices for your trees. And perhaps, to start a compost system to create black gold for your spring garden! Instead of raking leaves to the curb, allow fallen leaves to feed your trees, enrich the soil and provide overwinter protection for roots and habitat for insects. Registration required. Online. FREE.

### Big Fall Clean-Up

Friends of the Rappahannock  
October 30, 9 AM – 1 PM

The Big Fall Cleanup is back! Friends of the Rappahannock is partnering with the Fredericksburg Nationals on this year's largest Rappahannock River Cleanup at Old Mill Park. Check out the website for more details and registration.

### Halloween Campfire & Trunk or Treat

Caledon State Park

October 30, 5:30 PM – 10 PM

The Halloween Campfire is a free event with spooky stories, "trunk-or-treating," and more! Bring your own s'mores supplies if you would like for during the campfire. Prizes for costumes and decorated vehicles will be awarded at the end of the event. To register for this event, call (540) 663-3861.

### Hoop House Winterization & Preservation

Virginia State University (VSU)  
November 4, 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Do you own or are you interested in owning a high tunnel or hoop house? Let Grace Summers of VSU Small Farm Outreach Program and her over 30 years of hoop house/high tunnel/greenhouse experience guide you into how to protect and preserve your growing investment going into the winter season. Registration required!

### Insects: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Downtown Greens

November 6, 2 PM – 3 PM

Join Downtown Greens to talk about some of the amazing creepy-crawlies in our area! Learn which ones are here to help and which ones are considered pests. This class is hosted in conjunction with Habitat for Humanity and will be held at their office at **2376 Plank Road, Fredericksburg, Virginia, 22401**. FREE.

### Winterizing Beehives

Virginia State University (VSU)  
November 17, 9 AM – 11:30 AM

Keith Tignor, Virginia State Apiarist, will cover the steps needed to winterize your beehives. Topics will include opening a hive for inspection, pest identification and management, techniques to feed bees over the winter, the best cover crops and species of trees to plant that produce the most nectar and pollen and when and how to order honeybee nucs in preparation for the spring. Registration required!

Interested in exploring more events? The Virginia Cooperative Extension has a Google Calendar that compiles and updates events across the state! Check out more events [here](#).



# Tri-County/City Soil & Water Conservation District Directory

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### APPOINTED DIRECTORS

**VA Cooperative Extension**, Extension Agent  
Pending Appointment

**VA Soil & Water Conservation Board**, At-large  
Ray Simms, since 2020<sup>1</sup>

### ELECTED DIRECTORS

#### **Fredericksburg**

Giannina D. Frantz, since 2012  
Charles "Chuck" Koch, since 2020

#### **King George**

Janet Gayle Harris (Treasurer), since 1990  
Robert "Bob" Wernsman, since 2016

#### **Spotsylvania**

Jan Massey (Vice Chair), since 2016  
Wayne W. Miller (Secretary), since 1972

#### **Stafford**

Jeff Adams, since 2016  
Tim Makee, since 2020

### ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

John Howe, Stafford - since 2015<sup>2</sup>

## STAFF

Renee Davis, Administrative Professional  
Mariya Hudick, Education Coordinator  
Logan Ellis, Conservation Specialist  
Dan Kossler, Conservation Specialist  
Marta Perry, District Manager

## PARTNERS

### **VA Department of Forestry**

Manij Upadhyay, Area Forester

### **USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service**

Brian Wooden, District Conservationist

### **VA Department of Conservation & Recreation**

Marissa Roland, Regional District Coordinator

<sup>1</sup> Also elected as Director for Spotsylvania 1974-75, 1982-83, and 1995-2015,

<sup>2</sup> Also appointed as Director for VA Cooperative Extension from 2000-2010.

**TCCSWCD maintains a working relationship with the following agencies and organizations to reach common conservation goals:**

City of Fredericksburg  
King George County  
Spotsylvania County  
Stafford County  
Friends of the Rappahannock  
Plant Central Rappahannock Natives Campaign  
Tree Fredericksburg  
George Washington Regional Council  
Potomac River Watershed Roundtable  
Rappahannock River Basin Commission  
York River & Small Coastal Basins Roundtable  
Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts  
VA Department of Conservation & Recreation  
VA Cooperative Extension  
VA Department of Environmental Quality  
VA Department of Forestry  
VA State Parks  
VA Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services  
VA Department of Wildlife Resources  
VA Outdoors Foundation  
USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service  
USDA - Farm Services Agency  
U.S. Army Corp of Engineers  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

All programs and services of the Tri-County/City Soil and Water Conservation District are available without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, age, marital status, disability, gender, gender identity, political affiliation or any other basis protected by law.

The Commonwealth of Virginia supports Tri-County/City Soil & Water Conservation District through financial & administrative assistance provided by the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation.